

Socialization and Violence in Liquid Modernity: The Role of Television and Social Media

Dr. Paul N. Mwangi and Dr. Lydiah W. Wangungu
South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya.

Corresponding Author: Dr. Paul N. Mwangi

Abstract

Judging by the continuity and the effects of violence on human coexistence, the issue of violence and socialization is of great importance. Among the most important life conditions to which all human beings must adjust is the presence of other people, who become involved in socialization as agents of instruction, as models to be imitated, and as sources of reinforcement. Despite the rating of television content with regard to the prescribed audience, children get exposed to violent content in different ways. The child and youth watching and listening to violent television programs, exposed to violent content in social media platforms is usually considered a completely privatised being, isolated before a glaring eye that provides dangerous stimuli. In the process the child and the youth are inoculated against peaceful coexistence and violence is presented as an acceptable part of human existential reality. The 21st century has witnessed interruptions, surprises and incoherence that make it to be equated with the fluidity of liquids and gases. The nature and character of violence has as such demonstrated continuous change. However, violence in many forms is preventable. There is a strong relationship between levels of violence and modifiable factors such as violent socialization, and the absence of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between children, youth and parents. The current article, attempts an analysis of violent socialization of children and the youth through television and social media and how to mitigate such violence. The article provides a critical analysis and insights regarding effective practices in social sciences contexts. Specifically the article contributes to the continuous debate on the socialization of children and the youth. The debate indicates that television programming and social media are effective tools in the process of socialization be it negative or positive. Given the vastness of the topic and related areas, the current study is limited to youth and children and how television programming and social media content in the 21st century is responsible in the process of socialization. The study supports the use of family-based interventions that challenge acceptance of violence beliefs and teach anger control techniques. This will help elevate consequences such as economic loss, social disruption, diminished quality of life, family disruptions, disability, psychological trauma, morbidity and mortality.

Keywords: Socialization, Violence, Liquid Modernity, Modernity, Programming

INTRODUCTION

According to World Health Organization, violence is defined as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or a group or a community, that either results to or has a high likelihood of resulting to injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.¹ Violence is heterogeneous and has no respect for; gender, age, individual, family, community, cultural, ethnic, or religious group, country or region. At the individual level, the individual may be a victim of child maltreatment, psychological or personality disorder, alcohol or substance abuse, or history of violent behaviour.

Types of violence with public health impacts include; collective violence, interpersonal violence, sexual crime, abuse of child, elder or disabled person, street crime, neglect, and acts of war and cyber bullying.

Most of violence is relational where poor parenting practices, marital discord, violent parental discord, low social economic household status, and friends that engage in violence may all yield to violence in relationships. Violence has classification and levels; violent acts: assault, verbal abuse, and sexual abuse. Some of the precipitating factors include war, robbery, and mental illness. Some of the contributing factors include but not limited to drugs and alcohol, poverty, culture, emotion, psychosis, high crime levels, high residential mobility, high unemployment, and situational factors. Other factors include loss of social fabric, cultural support and social isolation.

Complex interactions may result to violence that may with time become seen as normal; war, sectarian violence or societal collapse. At the social level violence may be as a result of rapid social change, gender, social and economic inequalities, poverty, weak economic safe nets, poor rule of law, and cultural norms that support violence. For example,

¹ Krug et al., 'The World Report on Violence and Health', 1083.

some research has found that anger expression styles and acceptance of violence beliefs mediate the relationship between experiencing family violence and dating violence perpetration.² Anger control and acceptance of violence beliefs, mediate the relationship between interparental conflict and dating violence perpetration. These results support the use of family-based interventions that challenge acceptance of violence beliefs and teach anger control techniques.³

The consequences of violence include but are not limited to; economic loss, social disruption, diminished quality of life, loss of potential, family disruption, disability, psychological trauma, morbidity and mortality. The ideal for human beings is to strive for authentic human existence that is fundamentally *personal* existence. The most appropriate embodiment of this effort is to be found within relationships devoid of violence.

The study will help creators of mass media content to avoid materials such as some computer games that promote glamorized violence among the children and the youth. A home environment that advocates for family values such as love and respect produce mentally healthy children. This study advocates for such a home environment and so it serves to solidify family values.

Children learn about current themes and issues through mass media. Some of the themes such as kidnaps, domestic violence may be beyond the children and the youth. This introduces the need for vetting of programmes as well as control of view times. Religion helps in socialization of children and youths. The study highlights the importance of religion in modelling children and youths.

A majority of children and youth are vulnerable and susceptible to the exposure to violence available in television programming and social media. This study advocates for need for set-up services to help such children and youths. Increased education opportunities, eradication of poverty and community involvement would help in socialization of children and youth. This paper highlights the importance of education and community involvement in positive socialization of children.

The Concept of Liquid Modernity and Socialization

In the book *One World: How Globalization is Shaping Our Future*, Dahl Gregory notes that, this age may one day be regarded as the most turbulent,

dangerous, and promising of any period in human history where people throughout the world are experiencing an unprecedented and often disorienting pace of change affecting every aspect of their lives.⁴ When populations go through drastic change it is the children and the youth who bare the blunt edge of the change as they receive an orientation from significant others that are grappling with a past that they are well aware of yet destabilized and on the other hand they have the present that is opaque and appears an illusion. Given the changes and uncertainties in the world, young people in many countries are no longer sure they can count on a better life than their parents.⁵ The current study looks at the effects of the changes and uncertainties to children and the youth and how this can be mitigated through positive socialization.

The globalising and unsettling forces of capitalism, technology, climate change, mass media and popular culture, chart a reality marked by fleetness, disorientation and rapid social change.⁶ Many people react from feelings of distress and marginalization. Violence becomes a way of demanding space, relevance, resources or even opportunities. However, there should be a pro-active exercise of tolerance as an affirmation of life in its multiple expressions.⁷ Children and the youth need to be socialized as moral beings who are able to make moral choices. With an increasing pluralisation of societies and consciousness, tolerance appears not only as a desirable moral virtue, but as a necessary systemic quality which, once grafted with freedom and equality, makes of democracy the best arrangement for shaping our collective and global fate.⁸ The current study investigates the place of socialization in promoting violence or tolerance.

The 21st century has been an age of technological advancement. Technological innovations affect wealth, power, culture patterns, gender relationships and work.⁹ The computer, radio, mobile phone and transportation related technologies have facilitated rapid movement of people, goods and services across the globe. Technology can extend the power of the already powerful, and it can increase the power of the relatively weak.¹⁰ For instance, information technologies allow people to have access to far wider range information than in the past, and to be able to use it in turn for strengthening themselves further. The progress in the social media makes availability of information at the finger tips of the youth and the television makes information available to the children as they follow programs and movies. The social

² Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa, 'Anger Control and Acceptance of Violence as Mediators in the Relationship between Exposure to Interparental Conflict and Dating Violence Perpetration in Mexican Adolescents', 619.

³ Clarey, Hokoda, and Ulloa, 624.

⁴ Dahl, *One World One People*, 1.

⁵ Dahl, 2.

⁶ Hadsell and Stuckelberger, *Overcoming Fundamentalism*, 173.

⁷ Hadsell and Stuckelberger, 174.

⁸ Hadsell and Stuckelberger, 174.

⁹ Vago, *Social Change*, 291.

¹⁰ Vago, 291.

media has lessened the power of those who control the major media networks and has become a factor in shaping the flow of issues and concerns that command public attention.¹¹ It is observable that, technology has had a profound impact on patterns of intimacy, home life, socialization practices, and leisure-time activities, in addition to many others.¹² For the current study, computer games and applications with violent content and strong language will have a negative impact when children and youths are exposed to such without control from responsible significant others. The social structures of families, electronic media are thoroughly incorporated with the foundation of life, with television, movies, videos, music, video games, and computers central to both occupation and play.¹³

In the process of personal development, many are the social forces that attempt to mould people into functioning members of society in spite of individual differences.¹⁴ Personal development gives to observable personal traits that determine how people adjust to their environment and how they react in specific situations. Thomas W. LaVerne notes that personality development tends to be more obvious during childhood, when people are experiencing rapid physical, emotional, and intellectual growth.¹⁵ In the process of personality development, some of the major factors that influence the process include but not limited to birth order, parents, the cultural environment, and heredity. Of importance to this study is the cultural environment and how it influences personality development. It is likely that, an environment that nurtures competitiveness, assertiveness and individualism is likely to foment violence when people's space, resources and even identity appear to be violated.

At the heart of educational goals is the socialization of children and the youth to know their role in the all embracing network of human relations. Sifuna and Otiende observe that normative educational goals are concerned with instilling the acceptable standards and beliefs governing correct behaviour and expressive educational goals with creating unity and consensus.¹⁶ In a market and consumer driven society, competitiveness in every social arena has been the norm in the 21st century. Competition breeds winners and losers, where winners are seen to take all and losers then feel disenfranchised. It is notable that education has largely been seen as a preparation for employment in a very competitive environment. It

means that the competition for opportunities and resources takes centre stage in an education system that is founded on consumerism and market forces. Before the encounter with the European and American culture, African indigenous education was not only concerned with the systematic socialization of the younger generation into norms, religious and moral beliefs and collective opinions of the wider society but it also placed a very strong emphasis on learning practical skills and the acquisition of knowledge which was useful to the individual and the society as a whole.¹⁷ It is likely that the competitiveness in a market and consumer based society has a role in the prevalence of violence in our day.

Life is largely a process of satisfying wants; wants for food, clothing, shelter, information, school grades, new experiences, excitement, approval of others, and so on.¹⁸ In the socialization process, delayed gratification is an art learnt as a response when wants are not satisfied at all or are not satisfied as per expectation. However, the satisfaction of wants maybe hindered or interfered with by difficulties of at least three types – personal inability, physical limitation, and social taboo.¹⁹ The interrelationship of these factors-the want or motive, the satisfaction or goal, and the hindrance or difficulty-constitutes the pattern of organic adjustment to environment.²⁰ When children and the youth are not trained in delayed gratification, it is easy for one to imagine that wants should be satisfied on the spot irrespective of how. If wants are strong, perhaps even necessary for life, and if hindrance are great, then states of tension are created that act as internal drives to activity.²¹ This study looks into violence as such activity and how it can be mitigated.

Next to the family in terms of impact on children and the youth is television and social media. For instance, there are potential dangers to violent TV viewing and one of the most disturbing dangers is that young children become more violent themselves as teenagers, and tend to have more encounters with the law as adults.²² More specifically, most violence on television follows a highly formulaic pattern that is both sanitized and glamorized. By being sanitized, it means that its portrayals fail to show realistic harm to victims, both from a short and long-term perspective. Immediate pain and suffering by victims of violence is included in less than half of all scenes of violence. More than a third of violent interactions depict

¹¹ Vago, 291.

¹² Raza, Awan, and Gondal, 'What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children', 58.

¹³ Raza, Awan, and Gondal, 58.

¹⁴ Thomas, *Sociology: The Study of Human Relationships*, 100.

¹⁵ Thomas, 100.

¹⁶ Sifuna and Otiende, *An Introduction: History of Education*, 150.

¹⁷ Sifuna and Otiende, 150.

¹⁸ Skinner, *Educational Psychology*, 526.

¹⁹ Skinner, 527.

²⁰ Skinner, 527.

²¹ Skinner, 527.

²² Raza, Awan, and Gondal, 'What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children', 58.

unrealistically mild harm to victims, grossly understating the severity of injury that would occur from such actions in the real world. In sum, most depictions sanitize violence by making it appear to be much less painful and less harmful than it really is.²³ For instance the aggression telecasted by the cartoon movies is absorbed by children and then they implement that violence in their daily life.²⁴

Television programming and content may present glamorized violence. This means that violence is performed by attractive role models who are often justified for acting aggressively and who suffer no remorse, criticism, or penalty for their violent behavior. More than a third of all violence is committed by attractive characters, and more than two-thirds of the violence they commit occurs without any signs of punishment.²⁵ Violence that is presented as sanitized or glamorized poses a much greater risk of adverse effects on children than violence that is presented with negative outcomes such as pain and suffering for its victims or negative consequences for its perpetrators.²⁶

In the family context, a mother and father, each with self-worth, character, and genuine love, showing respect for each other and acknowledging Christ as the head of the home, tend to produce mentally healthy children with self-worth, character, and genuine love for others.²⁷ The home environment that children and the youth experience is very important in organising their response to life situations of any kind. Apparently parenting is not taught and therefore parents take their children through life mostly without any reference to benchmarks of good parenting save for seminars and workshops organised by religious groups in a very ad hoc manner. What parents feed into children's and youths' minds is what will come out in years to come. Television can be a useful thing or a great hindrance to children's and youths' emotional and spiritual maturation, depending on how it is used.²⁸ Violent socialization in this regard begets violent children and youths who later staff the adult population as a violent people.

Children and youth learn through various methods special to us here is modelling or learning from others. In this method people naturally tend to imitate, or model, the behaviour of significant

others.²⁹ Responses acquired through observational learning are especially strengthened through vicarious reinforcement, which occur when the model is reinforced for action, or weakened through vicarious punishment, in which the model is punished for an action.³⁰ Observational learning is the process by which children learn to model behaviors of others in real life or on the screen. For instance, a child may imitate a wrestling move if he feels it would garner him attention. Although most violent programs come with a warning urging viewers not to "try this at home," some children still repeat violent activities they observe on television, especially if, like in the majority of movies, the violent activity is rewarded or not followed by any negative consequences. Observational or social learning can have significant negative effects when significant others present anti social behaviour patterns as the norm. For example, children witness thousands of reinforced acts of violence by just watching violent cartoons and violent content in television programs.³¹

It is notable that children are psychologically affected by having less empathy, a characteristic observable in bullies; that they are more likely to use aggressive strategies to solve their problems rather than to search for more peaceful methods of conflict resolution; that they tend to be more reactive rather than proactive — relying more on knee-jerk reactions to resolve frustrations; and finally, that they appear to be more fearful of social relationships which make them bite before they can be bitten.³² This perception of danger, when coupled with a lack of empathy, can lead to sadistic behavior. Moreover, children seeing too much violence on TV, and taking roles in violent video games are more likely to be argumentative, as they are dispensed with the slow caution of inhibitors. These children act out in class and are more likely to be the class bully. Since they seem to be less patient than their counterparts, studies show that children who watch too much violence on TV and other electronic media devices appear to be more unwilling to cooperate, and delay gratification. Therefore, they seem to demonstrate a strong sense of entitlement.³³

Observational learning through television can literally change or determine our everyday view of the world to a point of normalizing behaviour that is in the end anti social. Although only 1% of people who watch a violent television program become more violent after watching the show, the implication is scary when we consider that it only takes one or two people to terrorize a building or commit murder in a

²³ Smith, 'Psychological Effects of Violent Media on Children'.

²⁴ Raza, Awan, and Gondal, 'What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children', 59.

²⁵ Smith, 'Psychological Effects of Violent Media on Children'.

²⁶ Anderson, 'The Production of Media Violence and Aggression Research: A Cultural Analysis', 1260.

²⁷ Meir, Minirth, and Wichern, *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*, 112.

²⁸ Meir, Minirth, and Wichern, 113.

²⁹ Nairne, *Psychology*, 250.

³⁰ Nairne, 251.

³¹ Nairne, 251.

³² Anderson, 'The Production of Media Violence and Aggression Research: A Cultural Analysis', 1265.

³³ Gross, 'Violence on TV and How It Can Affect Your Children'.

school.³⁴ In a free world where children and youths are left to their own whims to decide what is right and what is wrong, it is very easy to pick up and model violence as the norm in responding to disagreements and disputes of any kind. Violence on television then, does have an adverse affect on children and the way they think and act.

Video games are another source of violence. The National Coalition on Television Violence reported there has been a consistent increase in the number of violent themed video games. These games increased from fifty three percent in 1985 to eighty two percent in 1988.³⁵ The agreement amongst researchers on television violence is that there is a significant increase from 3% to 15% in individuals' aggressive behavior after watching violent television.³⁶ Even if the choices did exist the research has proven parents actually have no clue as to what their children watch on television, computers and mobile phones. Parents need to be attentive to the content these games have and question whether they are appropriate for the age of their children.³⁷ Parents should also monitor the amount of time their children spend playing video games and networks in social media.

One multicultural study that was completed, found that in six different nations young Americans had the least amount of work responsibility assigned to them.³⁸ This leads to an excess number of manufactured video games and store bought materials to entertain them. Rather than being forced to go outside to participate in activities they are encouraged to stay inside and watch television or play video games alone using computers and mobile phones. Together these two factors contribute to video game over usage. A study conducted in 1989, on video game usage and content found that most of the arcade games contained "antisocial values of a violent nature."³⁹

Zygmunt Bauman notes that the features of fluids amount to, in simple language, is that liquids, unlike solids, cannot easily hold their shape neither fix their space nor bid time.⁴⁰ In this regard, when describing fluids, to leave time out of account would be a grievous mistake since descriptions of fluids are all snapshots, and they need a date at the bottom of the picture.⁴¹ The metaphor of fluidity or liquidity is a fitting description when we wish to understand the nature of the present, in many ways novel, phase in

the history of modernity.⁴² The coming of modernity has been mainly through the negation of traditional loyalties, customary rights and obligations which bound hands and feet, hindered moves and cramped the enterprise.

Effects of Socialization on Various Social Practices in the Society

Through the process of socialization, the hidden hand of social forces beyond our control guides our lives. The major agents of socialization – family, school, peers, mass media, public opinion, and religion – exert pressure on each of us. The evolution of "self" emerges from this mix of social forces. This is particularly true during the formative years from kindergarten through high school. The impact of these forces can vary dramatically from person to person. The consequences can be life altering and severe.⁴³

The idea that each child enters school with the same opportunities that foster success is not a valid assumption. In fact, many things have a profound impact on children and teens. The socialization process, by definition, creates a system that is inherently unequal by most empirical measures of equality. This inequality has both short-term and long-term implications for the academic success of children. Given an economic system that offers equality of opportunity, but in practice fosters disparities between social classes, the questions that must be asked are: How does the education system provide the level playing field that society desires? What are the roles of school as well as the other agents of socialization in ensuring equal opportunity for all children from the elementary through college years?

As the primary agent of socialization and the first "educator", the family, plays an essential role in the transmission of the fundamental values that encourage and nurture learning in a young child. Studies have demonstrated that children from homes in which both parents have college educations have a much higher probability of academic success as well as personal and professional success. The opposite is also true. Children from homes in which parents do not possess a college education will have a more difficult time achieving academic success. The disparity inherent in this environment demonstrates the importance of the family and its role as the transmitter of values. The institution of the family is the primary purveyor of education as a core value regardless of educational background. For some, it comes by way of birth and privilege. For others, it comes by way of perseverance, hard work, and persistence in the face of adverse economic factors.

³⁴ Nairne, *Psychology*, 252.

³⁵ Cesarone, 'Video Games and Children', 3.

³⁶ Cesarone, 3.

³⁷ Anderson, 'The Production of Media Violence and Aggression Research: A Cultural Analysis', 1264.

³⁸ Cesarone, 'Video Games and Children', 4.

³⁹ Cesarone, 5.

⁴⁰ Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 3.

⁴¹ Bauman, 3.

⁴² Bauman, 3.

⁴³ Perrino, 'The Socialization Process and Its Impact on Children and Learning'.

Regardless, the likelihood of academic success is minimal without the family as a guiding force.⁴⁴

Few parents would deny the increasing influence of peers in the lives of children and young adults. Unfortunately, it is often a very negative influence. The most detrimental manifestations of this are drugs and alcohol use, premature teen sexual activities, and other socially proscribed behaviors. It is at this time in a middle school child's life that peer influences develop in the area of academic achievement. Being ostracized and chastised for "being smart" is a common burden placed on otherwise high-achieving students, particularly minority students. At this point in a student's socialization process teachers, parents, and other adult role models play a vital role.

Television and social media also has an immense impact on young minds. With the advent of the Internet and mobile phones, television now has partners in the role of visual stimulant of young minds. The culture portrayed by television and social media emphasizes glamour, sexual satisfaction and promiscuity, comedic vulgarity, violence, and immediate gratification of needs. How does a parent cope with the influences of the television and social media as agents of socialization that minimizes the learning process and glorifies the values of instant gratification? Again, the role of adults in a child's life in this environment takes on increased importance.

Television and mobile phone applications present a very different form of socialization than any other, because they offer no opportunity for interaction. Television is the medium with the greatest socialization effect, surpassing social media by far in its influence on the young child. The very fact that television is not an interactive agent is greatly significant to the development of young children. While watching, children have the feeling that they're interacting, but they're not. That's one of the disadvantages of television as a socializer—it satisfies social needs to some extent, but doesn't give children the social skills (or the real-life practice in those skills) that allow them to function effectively with people. Since the average child watches 3 to 4 hours of television a day, the time left for playing with others and learning social skills is drastically reduced.

Parents can control the time their children spend watching television, but many don't. They can monitor the selection of programs, but some allow their children to watch whatever happens to be on. Some parents don't consider how they can use television to teach decision making. They don't make children aware that when one program ends they can

either weigh the various merits of the next offerings or turn the set off. Some children, especially those with a remote control in hand, flick through the channels periodically, randomly stopping at whatever catches their interest at the moment. That's very different from critically examining options and consciously deciding on one. Some parents who grew up with television themselves haven't given much thought to the effects of that medium, and how to decrease these effects. The possession and use of mobile phones may be even harder to sensor for profitable content and interaction.

Some of the things children and the youth watch and follow on television and social media are beneficial while others are not. They learn about the world and the ways of the society. They learn something about occupations, for example, getting an idea about what a nurse does, what a doctor does, and how the two relate to each other. They learn about the institutions of the society—what goes on in court, for example. They learn the language to go with these roles and settings—and they learn some language you'd rather they didn't know!⁴⁵ Children also learn about current themes and issues, both from newscasts and dramas—issues such as kidnapping, the homeless, and the spread of AIDS. Most of these issues and themes are not happy ones, and many are very frightening, especially when children watch programs that are intended for adults.

Children learn more than facts from television; they also get a good daily dose of stereotypes and a lot of misleading information about their world. Most of all, they get a big helping of violence and another of commercial advertising.⁴⁶ Whether good or bad, whatever is in the television will be individualized in the mobile phones with an added component of wider interaction and content. The role of religion in the lives of children and the youths has been minimized by society. This trend has, along with the previously mentioned influences of television and social media, resulted in a generation of teens with a moral compass that has gone awry. The role of religion as an agent of socialization cannot be ignored. It is a primary transmitter of our core personal and societal values. Without the socializing influences of religion, the powerful external forces faced by youths – drugs, a sexualized culture, violence, negative peer pressures, and other dysfunctional influences - become more influential. Parents need to be aware of the stabilizing influences of religion in a child's life and realize that religion is not so much a polarizing issue as it is an important element of the socialization process.

⁴⁵ Perrino, 'The Socialization Process and Its Impact on Children and Learning'.

⁴⁶ Livingstone, 'On the Mediation of Everything: ICA Presidential Address 2008', 5.

⁴⁴ Gonzalez, *Child, Family and Community: Family-Centred Early Care Aand Education*.

The socialization process has an enormous impact on children and the youths in the learning process. Family, school, peers, mass and social media, and religion each play a role in the collective process we term education. Parents must recognize that each of these agents of socialization maximize the role of education in children's lives. Anything less is an abdication of our responsibility as adult role models for our children and for future generations.⁴⁷

Insights into Implications of Violence in Social Relationships and Practices

A University of Pittsburgh Mass Media Violence report found that police dramas, violent cartoons and other programs containing violent activity influenced children to perceive the world as more dangerous and unsafe. In fact, frequent viewers of violent programs are more likely to overestimate the risks of walking outside at night and the chances of becoming a victim of a crime, developing what psychologists call a "mean-world" mentality.⁴⁸

Repeated exposure to violent television and social media results in less psychological arousal in the presence of violent acts, a phenomenon known as desensitization. In one experiment, college students who watched movies containing violent sexual acts viewed rape as less negative of a crime than students who watched neutral movies. Other research published in the December 2003 edition of "Psychological Science in the Public Interest" supports this theory of desensitization, adding that children who even briefly witness violent programs experience less sympathy toward victims of violent acts and less anxiety towards real-world violence following exposure.⁴⁹

Research data from social scientific bodies in the United States of America have come to the conclusion that televised violence has an adverse effect on children and the youth in any society.⁵⁰ The social scientific bodies include; the American Psychological Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Psychiatric Association. Their research data point overwhelmingly to a causal connection between media violence and aggressive behaviour in some children.⁵¹ The evidence is that extensive television viewing among adolescents and young adults is associated with subsequent aggressive acts.

Many people appear not to understand that media violence contributes to a more violent society.⁵² It has recently been demonstrated that even as the scientific evidence linking television and social media violence to aggression has accumulated, news reports about the effects of media violence have shifted to weaker statements, implying that there is little evidence for such effects.⁵³ This inaccurate reporting in the popular press may account for continuing controversy long after the debate should have been over after the scientific community knew the effects of televised violence on the socialization process.

Theories about human aggression suggest at least two approaches to reducing media-related aggression. One involves reducing exposure to violent media. Robinson and colleagues reported one such intervention that significantly reduced aggression among third and fourth graders over a 6-month period.⁵⁴ The other approach involves changing children's attitudes toward televised violence. The study by Johnson and colleagues suggests that televised and social media violence affects a larger group of people than previously believed, and that interventions for children and the youth might also be beneficial. Such approaches are needed because a heavy diet of media violence contributes to a societal violence rate that is unnecessarily obese.⁵⁵

In children, seeing their mothers abused can often cause: angry or aggressive behaviour copying the violence or they may become very quiet and withdraw to escape notice. Children may experience nightmares and other fears. Children in abusive families often do not eat well, grow and learn more slowly than other children, and have many illnesses, like stomach aches, headaches, and asthma. Violence may cause injury and death if the violence is turned on children.⁵⁶ In the wider community, violence can cause the cycle of violence to continue into new generations. The continued false belief that men are better than women makes everyone's quality of life to suffer because women take part less in their communities when they are silenced or killed by the violence.⁵⁷

In women, men's violence can cause: lack of motivation or lack of a sense of self-worth, mental health problems, like anxiety and problems of eating

⁴⁷ Perrino, 'The Socialization Process and Its Impact on Children and Learning'.

⁴⁸ Gross, 'Violence on TV and How It Can Affect Your Children'.

⁴⁹ Gross.

⁵⁰ Anderson and Bushman, 'The Effects of Media Violence on Society', 2377.

⁵¹ Anderson and Bushman, 2377.

⁵² Raza, Awan, and Gondal, 'What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children', 59.

⁵³ Anderson and Bushman, 'The Effects of Media Violence on Society', 2377.

⁵⁴ Anderson and Bushman, 'The Effects of Media Violence on Society'.

⁵⁵ Anderson and Bushman, 2379.

⁵⁶ Anderson, 'The Production of Media Violence and Aggression Research: A Cultural Analysis', 1260.

⁵⁷ Burns et al., *Where Women Have No Doctor*, 320.

and sleeping. As a way to cope with the violence, women may begin harmful or reckless behaviors—such as using drugs or alcohol, or having many sex partners. It can also cause serious pain and injuries such as: broken bones, burns, black eyes, cuts, bruises, headaches, belly pain, and muscle pains that may continue for many years after the abuse happens. Sexual health problems may also arise. Many women suffer miscarriages from being beaten during pregnancy. They may also suffer from unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or be infected with HIV as a result of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse often also leads to a fear of having sex, pain during sex, and lack of desire. The other result of violence is death.⁵⁸

For change to happen, people must stop thinking of violence against women as something that ‘is just the way things are’ or that is the woman’s fault. Some ideas in helping stop violence are worth noting. First people and communities need to talk about violence. However, in some communities, working against violence can be dangerous. Talking about the abuse is the first step to changing it. Abused women should: try to find other women who have the same problems with violent and abusive men and share ideas with each other, find men who believe that violence is wrong, make violence something people talk about and make it into something that people think is wrong.⁵⁹

Second, there should be set up services to help women and people who leave situations of violence.⁶⁰ It means that there should be a ‘safe house’ or shelter as soon as possible to take care of the victims of violence. The safe shelter should be kept hidden and secret. The community and non violence organizations should be involved in caring for the victims of violence. For example, a network of health organizations can help. One can also share the information with respected community members who are trustworthy. All the members of the society and especially men should be used in creating a violent free society. In the same way, women need to learn about their rights under the law. Special and specific laws about families and violence that women can use need to be known and used in response to violence. As for the victims, they need new skills, so that they have a way to support themselves.

Thirdly, people and the community should use social pressure.⁶¹ In some communities in Central America, men volunteer to patrol their communities to warn the people of attacks, and to keep them safe from crime. In these communities, violence against women is not tolerated. If a man is caught beating his wife, he

knows the other men in the town will punish him. Community leaders and other men should be encouraged to speak out against violence against women and to show their disapproval of men who beat women. In some countries, women have organized to get laws passed that punish men who abuse their wives. But laws do not always work well for abused women. In some places, the people who are supposed to enforce the laws—especially the police, the lawyers, and the judges—cannot be trusted to help. But when the legal system and the police both work to protect everyone, people need also to learn as much as possible about the laws and about women’s rights.⁶²

Children and the youth should be nurtured to lead non-violent lives. Right from the home environment, the school, and the television and social media, all should work for change in the society and specifically in the home for children and the youth to find peaceful ways to solve problems. In gender related violence, boys should be taught to respect themselves and to respect girls and women.⁶³

RECOMMENDATIONS

General principles in the prevention of violence include but are not limited to; increased education and opportunities, poverty reduction, reduction of social disruption, curtail teen pregnancy, improved parenting, greater community involvement and security, decreased access to guns and alcohol, educational enrichment, extracurricular and vocational activities for example, preschool has been shown to be particularly effective, for improved social and academic skills and increased involvement in school and society.⁶⁴

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child takes cognisance of children as the most vulnerable to violence of any kind and magnitude. Adoption of this accord in any country and local law provides new awareness, as well as a framework for child protective services.

Most interventions are related to education, awareness and detection, legal reform, law enforcement and support for victims. Most efforts are focused in developed countries. However, there has been recent expansion in the developing world. Interventions are largely driven by women’s and advocacy groups and political pressure for reform. Healthcare professionals’ interventions primarily include raising awareness, screening and referral. Community based outreach programs often increase

⁵⁸ Burns et al., 320.

⁵⁹ Burns et al., 324.

⁶⁰ Burns et al., 324.

⁶¹ Burns et al., 324.

⁶² Burns et al., 324.

⁶³ Burns et al., 324.

⁶⁴ Raza, Awan, and Gondal, ‘What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children’, 65.

use of services. Prevention campaigns and educational programs demonstrate increased awareness. The initiatives need to be in television and social media.

CONCLUSION

We have noted that the context of liquid modernity can most easily be seen in contemporary approaches to self-identity affecting children and the youth. In liquid modernity, constructing a durable identity that coheres over time and space becomes increasingly impossible. We have moved from a period where we understood ourselves as “pilgrims” in search of deeper meaning to one where we act as “tourists” in search of multiple but fleeting social experiences. In the process of fleeting social experiences, the young generation has the risk of accepting violence as normal and a currency to be used in human relationships. The desire for more productivity and more competition has been seen to court violence to subdue those who do not comply.⁶⁵

What emerges from the fading social norms is naked, frightened aggressive ego, in search of love and help. In the search for itself and an affectionate sociality, it easily gets lost in the jungle of the self. Someone who is poking around in the fog of his or her own self is no longer capable of noticing that this isolation, this solitary confinement of the ego is a mass sentence.⁶⁶ Some components of violent socialization include the quest for significance, a narrative serving as a vehicle for that significance, and a network of support.⁶⁷ There is also the motivation to matter, to be somebody, to have respect and power. Effective programs to help curb violence act on supporting individuals, families and communities. This includes increasing education and opportunities, investing in individuals in society and poverty reduction with television and social media as enabling tools.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, Craig A, and Brad J. Bushman. ‘The Effects of Media Violence on Society’. *Science’s Compass* 295 (29), 2377–79 (1972).
- Anderson, J. A. ‘The Production of Media Violence and Aggression Research: A Cultural Analysis’. *American Behavioral Scientist* 51, (8), 1260–79. (2008).
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006.
- Burns, August, Ronnie Lovich, Jane Maxwell, and Katharine Shapiro. *Where Women Have No Doctor*. California, USA: Hesperian Health Guides, 2014.
- Cesarone, Bernard. ‘Video Games and Children’. *Eric Digest*. Eric Data Base: Eric Publications, www.eric.ed.gov. (1994).
- Clarey, Amy, Audrey Hokoda, and Emilio C. Ulloa. ‘Anger Control and Acceptance of Violence as Mediators in the Relationship between Exposure to Interparental Conflict and Dating Violence Perpetration in Mexican Adolescents’. *Family Violence* 25, (7), 619–25. (2010).
- Dahl, Gregory C. *One World One People*. Wilmette, Illinois: Bahai Publishing, 2007.
- Gonzalez, Mena, J. *Child, Family and Community: Family-Centred Early Care Aand Education*. Prentice Hall, 2009.
- Gross, Gail. ‘Violence on TV and How It Can Affect Your Children’. *Huffpost* (blog), 26, (2017).
- Hadsell, Heidi, and Chistoph Stuckelberger. *Overcoming Fundamentalism*. Globethics.Net 2. Geneva: Globethics.net, 2009.
- Krug, Etienne G., James A. Mercy, Linda L. Dahlberg, and Anthony B. Zwi. ‘The World Report on Violence and Health’. *Science Direct, Public Health*, 360, (9339) 1083–88. (2002).
- Livingstone, S. ‘On the Mediation of Everything: ICA Presidential Address 2008’. *Journal of Communication* 59, (1) 1–18. (2009).
- Meir, Paul D., Frank B. Minirth, and Frank B. Wichern. *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*. Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987.
- Nairne, James, S. *Psychology*. Fourth. London: Vicki Knight, 2006.
- Perrino, Ralph G. ‘The Socialization Process and Its Impact on Children and Learning’. *Washington Family Magazine*, www.washingtonfamily.com. (2017).
- Raza, Syed Hassan, Sajid Mahmood Awan, and Sarfraz Nawaz Gondal. ‘What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children’. *Journal of Philosophy, Culture and Religion* (23), 58–64. (2016).
- Sifuna, D. N., and J. E. Otiende. *An Introduction: History of Education*. Revised. Nairobi: Nairobi University Press, 1994.
- Skinner, Charles E. *Educational Psychology*. Fourth. New Delhi: Prentice Hall, 2007.
- Smith, Sky. ‘Psychological Effects of Violent Media on Children’. *Livestrong.Com* (blog), n.d. (2017).
- Thomas, W. LaVerne. *Sociology: The Study of Human Relationships*. Fifth. New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1995.
- Vago, Steven. *Social Change*. Third. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1980.

⁶⁵ Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 30.

⁶⁶ Bauman, 30.

⁶⁷ Raza, Awan, and Gondal, ‘What Are Your Children Watching? Evaluation of the Educational, Emotional, Behavioral, Psychological, Physical and Religious Impacts of Cartoons on the School Going Children’, 61.